

Accords. These are the great ideas of freedom—the constant drumbeat of ideas that have been repeated time and time again in the Helsinki process.

The harsh realities of the present are challenges which signatories of the Helsinki Accords must address. Its member states must wrestle with these challenges and continue to achieve in the future the aims and goals of what was begun here 20 years ago. To realize these hopes and dreams requires planning, commitment, perseverance and hard work. The Helsinki process provides a vision for a future based on liberty and on the freedom to pursue a better life. As the Bible admonishes, where there is no vision, the people perish.

So, I compliment all the signers and I'm very proud to have been one of the thirty-five. In August 1975 we made serious promises to our countrymen and to people worldwide. Where human rights did not exist in the thirty-five nations twenty years ago, there is now significant progress and hope for even better times. I congratulate the people in each nation who used the tools of the Final Act to achieve the blessings of human rights.

I am confident that if we continue to be vigilant, what we began here two decades ago shall be viewed by future historians as a watershed in the cause of individual freedom and human rights. Twenty years from today, history will again judge whether or not the world is a better place to live because of what we promised here two decades ago, and because of what we promise here today and the promises we keep in the future.

The Helsinki Accords are not, then, a Final Act—rather they are an unfinished agenda for the continued growth of human freedom. On this anniversary date, let us resolve to continue anew the work of that agenda.

#### THE MENSCH WHO SAVED CHRISTMAS

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 18, 1995*

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, last week there was a terrible tragedy in Massachusetts, when a fire did enormous damage to the Malden Mills factory in Methuen, MA. While no one can undo the terrible effects of this fire, thanks to the enormous courage, compassion, and integrity of one individual, Aaron Feuerstein, the working men and women who were the victims of this terrible event have more hope than they otherwise might have. Aaron Feuerstein is the third generation in his family to run this company, and his actions since the tragedy have been an unparalleled example of how a human being can act in a moral manner in a very tough situation. In the Boston Globe for Sunday, December 17, columnist David Nyhan accurately conveys the heroic role that Aaron Feuerstein has played at a time when most people have done far less. Despite himself being a major victim of this tragedy, Aaron Feuerstein has acted with an extraordinary degree of humanity and decisiveness to administer to the other victims, and I believe it is important at a time when more and more working people are giving reason to doubt the essential fairness of the American economic system that the shining example that Aaron Feuerstein presents be fully understood and appreciated by the nation. I therefore ask that David Nyhan's excel-

lent presentation of what Aaron Feuerstein has done be printed here.

[From the Boston Globe, Dec. 17, 1995]

#### THE MENSCH WHO SAVED CHRISTMAS

Were it not for the 45-mile-an-hour winds ripping out of the Northwest, the sparks that they carried and the destruction they wrought, Aaron Feuerstein today would be just another rich guy who owned a one-time factory, in a country full of the same.

But the fire that destroyed New England's largest textile operation Monday has turned this 70-year-old businessman into a folk hero. If a slim, determined, devoutly-Jewish textile manufacturer can be Santa Claus, then Feuerstein is, to 2,400 workers whose jobs were jeopardized by the fire.

The flames, so intense and widespread that the smoke plume appeared in garish color on TV weathermen's radar maps, presented Feuerstein with a stark choice: Should he rebuild, or take the insurance money and bag it?

Aaron Feuerstein is keeping the paychecks coming, as best he can, for as long as possible, while he rushes to rebuild, and restore the jobs a whole valley-full of families depend upon.

Everybody got paid this week. Everybody got their Christmas bonus. Everybody will get paid at least another month. And Feuerstein will see what he can do after that. But the greatest news of all is that he will rebuild the factory.

The man has a biblical approach to the complexities of late-20th-century economics, capsulated by a Jewish precept:

"When all is moral chaos, this is the time for you to be a mensch."

In Yiddish, a mensch is someone who does the right thing. The Aaron Feuerstein thing. The chaos was not moral but physical in the conflagration that began with an explosion and soon engulfed the four-building Malden Mills complex in Methuen, injuring two dozen workers, a half-dozen firemen and threatening nearby houses along the Merrimack River site.

The destruction was near-absolute. It is still inexplicable how no one perished in a fast-moving firestorm that lit up the sky. This was one of New England's handful of manufacturing success stories, a plant that emerged from bankruptcy 14 years ago. The company manufactures a trademark fabric, Polartec fleece, used extensively in outdoor clothing and sportswear by outfits such as L. L. Bean and Patagonia.

The company was founded by Feuerstein's grandfather in 1907, and its history over the century has traced the rise, fall and rise again of textile manufacturing in New England mill towns.

Most of the textile makers fled south, leaving hundreds of red brick mausoleums lining the rocky riverbeds that provided the water-power to turn lathes and looms before electricity came in. The unions that wrested higher wages from flinty Yankee employers were left behind by the companies that went to the Carolinas and elsewhere, to be closer to cotton and farther from unions.

The Feuerstein family stuck it out while many others left, taking their jobs and their profits with them. The current boss is one textile magnate who wins high praise from the union officials who deal with him.

"He's a man of his word," says Paul Coorey, president of Local 311 of the Union of Needleworkers, Industrial and Textile Employees. "He's extremely compassionate for people." The union's New England chief, Ronald Alman, said: "He believes in the process of collective bargaining and he believes that if you pay people a fair amount of money, and give them good benefits to take care of their families, they will produce for you."

If there is an award somewhere for a Com-passionate Capitalist, this man should qualify hands-down. Because he is standing up for decent jobs for working people at a time when the vast bulk of America's employer class is chopping, slimming, hollowing-out the payroll.

Job loss is the story of America at the end of the century. Wall Street is going like gangbusters, but out on the prairie, and in the old mill towns, and in small-town America, the story is not of how big your broker's bonus is this Christmas but of how hard it is to keep working.

The day after the fire, Bank of Boston announced it will buy BayBanks, a mega-merger of financial titans that will result in the elimination of 2,000 jobs. Polaroid, another big New England employer, announced it would pare its payroll by up to 2,000 jobs. Across the country, millions of jobs have been eliminated in the rush to lighten the corporate sled by tossing overboard anyone who could be considered excess baggage by a Harvard MBA with a calculator for a heart.

Aaron Feuerstein, who went from Boston Latin High School and New York's Yeshiva University right into the mill his father owned, sees things differently; The help is part of the enterprise, not just a cost center to be cut.

"They've been with me for a long time. We've been good to each other, and there's a deep realization of that, that is not always expressed, except at times of sorrow."

And it is noble sentiments like those, coming at a time when they are most needed, that turns times of sorrow into occasions of triumph.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE DAVID F. RAY

HON. MIKE WARD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 18, 1995*

Mr. WARD. Mr. Speaker, I am taking this opportunity to acknowledge publicly an outstanding Kentuckian, Mr. David F. Ray. Next month, David will retire from the U.S. Secret Service after 31 years of distinguished service.

David ends his sterling career as the special agent in charge for the Louisville, Kentucky field office of the Secret Service. Previous assignments took David and his family to Charlotte, NC and the District of Columbia.

Conducting advance security arrangements for President Reagan's visit to the Peoples Republic of China and for his meeting with Soviet Union President Gorbachev was a hallmark of David's stint in Washington. During his tenure in Louisville, the Secret Service was responsible for numerous arrests involving fraud, forgery, and embezzlement. And, in 1992, David served as the principal security coordinator for visits to Kentucky by President Bush, Vice President Quayle, Presidential candidate Clinton, and Vice Presidential candidate Gore.

Mr. Speaker, Special Agent In Charge David F. Ray has devoted himself for 31 years to the service of his country as a member of the law enforcement community. It is with much pride that I extend my congratulations and best wishes to him and his family for a well-deserved retirement.